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**EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
OFFICE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY POLICY**

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20506

August 28, 1987

Dear Justice Evatt:

I wish to call your attention to a recent article published in the National Academy of Sciences' Journal ISSUES IN SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY. The article, titled "Environmental Epidemiology: Separating Politics and Sciences", was authored by Dr. Michael Gough, a former Senior Associate with the Congressional Office of Technology Assessment. In his article (copy attached, pg. 27) Dr. Gough noted, in discussing the concerns of the United States Congress for the Vietnam veteran via a mandated epidemiologic study, that the origins of the Agent Orange study were obviously political and social. Hence, he stated: "I believe it is poor policy to conduct science for purely political reasons. The better response is to deal with the social and scientific problems separately". The key, Gough concludes, is to know when science cannot provide the answer and when a political decision must be made instead.

In reflecting back to the Final Report of your "Royal Commission on the Use and Effects of Chemical Agents on Australian Personnel in Vietnam", it is apparent that you recognized the limits to which Agent Orange was a science problem. Indeed, I believe you correctly concluded that Agent Orange was but a symptom of a larger problem--our society's inability to deal compassionately with the Vietnam veteran. I hope your Commission's Report has led the way to settling the difficult issues of re-adjustment by both the Vietnam Veteran and the Australian Public.

I wish to again express my appreciation for the opportunities we have had, in both Australia and the United States, to meet and express our joint concerns for the courageous men who served our countries during the Vietnam Conflict.

Sincerely,



Alvin L. Young, Ph.D.
Senior Policy Analyst
for Life Sciences

The Honorable Justice Phillip Evatt
Royal Commissioner
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